

Berserker 28

Feb. 19, 1975

Berserker is a Diplomacy zine (?), coming to you from Doug Ronson, 864 Ingersoll Ct., Mississauga, Ont. L5J 2S1. Subscriptions are 7/\$1.00. Phone (416) 822-2274. Phone orders are accepted in accordance with the house-rules. No game openings at present.

Walt Buchanan (bless his soul) wrote to say that he actually liked "Tales..." He sent along his own little tale from his life in the American Navy: He was Officer of the Day and was supposed to ring the bell when the Admiral arrived. Of course, he forgot to ring the bell until the last moment and the Commanding Officer got caught running down the ladder by the Admiral. So, Walt got lots of flak for that little boo-boo.

Columbo's Canadian Quotations is full of interesting little quotes about this country. Here is one which was made by Dave Barrett, premier of British Columbia, reporting on a conversation with W.A.C. Bennett: "The premier called me a Waffle. Well, I called him a pancake. Then he called me a double Waffle. I called him a stack of pancakes. Knowing the way he feels about Quebec, I warned him if he calls me a Waffle again, I'll call him a crêpe suzette." If you're American and don't know anything about Canadian politics then you won't think it's funny, but it is.

CDGO - This issue of Berserker is going to all Canadian Gamesmasters. I have only heard from 3 of the 15 or so GMs. You are not automatically a member of CDGO just because you live in Canada. You must write me or at least put a note in your zine. Once again, I emphasize GMs are under no obligation to take on games; if your conscience says that you can't take on any games at a certain time that is fine.

GMs will be, however, limited in the number of games which are guaranteed to be picked up. Member GMs will also be discouraged from opening more games than they can handle.

I will endeavor to receive all member publications and I would appreciate it if each member could send me his sub rates.

Thank you.

Recently, we received a letter from a relative living in France, parts of which are quoted here:

"Many of you have never been here and have perhaps not been to Paris either. Paris may be just a tourist's dream town like Venice, Istanbul or Bombay. In real life things are different. When you live and work in a place, it does not matter much whether it is called New York, Winnipeg, or Canberra. The life of a commuter is similar wherever you are. Each place has some characteristic which prevents life from being perfect for

My typewriter is acting up which explains why the line spacing looks weird

the inhabitant.

Most English-speaking people probably imagine that Parisians live in multi-roomed apartments or suburban houses with 'all mod. con' as housing agents' adverts.. used to say before the war. Well, things are improving here but, in 1974, some 40% of Parisians have no W.C. in their living-quarters and about 25% do not even have running water. We are therefore lucky. We have our own W.C.'s, running water, water heaters and showers.

These plurals may surprise you. We live in two apartments about 150 m. apart. The lifeline between the two is provided by a PBX (private telephone exchange) and an extension line from one place to the other. Here we have two sizeable rooms and the larger kitchen (about 1.1 m x 1.6 m.). They are the day living-quarters. The other place has two smaller rooms which make our bedrooms.

The situation has arisen because we could not move from here and we needed a better bedroom for Victor than a corner of the dining-room. When we came here in 1960, we found the place in poor shape. Chimney flues were leaking and zinc sheets and plasterwork were falling from the outer walls. The then manager and other owners were in no hurry to do anything about this. I did, but it took time. We have not had a Dickens here to clean up the judicial processes.

In some 12 years, things have improved at considerable expense to some people. Our first manager was pushed out after I had shaken things up a bit. His successor eventually went to jail for embezzlement. The present man, the third, will have to leave before long. I got one chimney repaired after calling in the sanitary authorities. For the external fabric, I called the police in twice. The first time they had to take the manager to court. I have won one court case myself and another has been settled out of court. Our first manager made the blunder of attacking me for libel. Fortunately, not all building managers need such treatment to get work done. We do not have this sort of thing in our other place.

So much for the accommodation. Now for Victor and his schooling.. He spoke neither French nor English when he first came to us. We therefore put him to a local infants' school immediately on arrival. This is a state school and the teachers go on strike about twice a year. After four terms of that, we sent him to College Stanislas, the place which has had de Gaulle and many other ministers among its pupils. After four years there, we sent him to Ladycross, Seaford where he is at present. The value of French education can be judged from the fact that after two terms at Ladycross, Victor wrote better English than French. My personal experience shows that about 80% of the French population are illiterate. There must be something wrong with the teaching in schools but I have not so far determined what it is.

The illiteracy determination is made by a simple test. My official identity card, my company identity card and my postal cheques all have my name and address correctly typed on them. All that is necessary is to put one of them on the table and ask a public functionary, a shop assistant or some other pen-pusher to copy. The results are amusing if you are in no hurry. The more impudent ones contest the spelling of our name and get the street wrong. To get things done right here, it is advisable not to suffer from attacks of apoplexy.

On the health side, we keep fairly fit, one or two colds a year each and 'flu about once every ten years or so. Victor helps out with the colds but has not been long enough with us to try his hand at the 'flu sessions. He is 12½ now and will have been with us 8 years at the end of February. That may sound funny but I attribute this situation to our heavy consumption of fresh fruit and salads. There is more vitamin C in such things than in the demineralized cabbage offered in so many U.K. restaurants.

For her general condition, Marie-Christine goes to see a masseuse three times a week. The visits are reimbursed by the Social Security system.

From what I hear, the main activity during these visits is cackle. Those who did a little French at school will remember that all nouns in French have a sex (or gender). The cackle with the masseuse is definately feminine.

The French Social Security reimbursement process is one of the marvels of complicated and unnecessary paperwork. It scores over the income tax declaration in that most people have to go through the rigmarole more often. The income tax people get their own back by having invented an annual arithmetic competition which most people, like myself, get wrong. This enables a public functionary, usually a woman, to send each person a rude letter with the right answer, which she knew all the time of course.

About two years ago, my particular amazon sent me a registered, recorded delivery letter to inform me that I had declared I had earned 90Fr. (about 18 dollars) in the previous year. She proposed to tax me on 75Fr. and wished to know if I accepted that. Since I sent her my reply and appealed against the decision, I have heard no more about it. Maybe the appeal has not been dealt with yet.

A sight for tourists in Paris is the garbage collection. In the early 1960's, a law was passed which said that we all had to have silent garbage bins. This was a good idea but no-one thought that anything should be done about the garbage trucks. If you are not an early riser like myself, then a noise each morning somewhat like two U.S. steam passenger expresses having repeat performances of a head-on collision will cause you to look at the alarm clock. Heavy sleepers should arrange to be woken since the performance only lasts from 5 a.m. till about 8 a.m..

We hope this letter gives you some idea of what it is like to live here and shows that it does not get us down."

The point of printing that letter was not to put-down France but to make us appreciate Canada and everyday things which we take for granted. Sure, we have problems but compared to most other countries we're very lucky to be living here.

CANADA POST - At present, the situation is not bad but it can only get worse. At present Toronto is experiencing a mechanics strike and other postal workers are refusing to cross picket lines. About 50% of the mail in Canada goes through Toronto, including anything mailed from Mississauga. The workers plan to end the Strike Thursday night..

The letter carriers do not, at present, have a contract and have been negotiating for 30 days. They have already rejected one offer and will be in strike position by late March or early April.

Meanwhile, the Union of Postal Workers are demanding that the Post Office become a Crown Corporation. The posties hope to gain the rights to bargain on technological changes, employee relocations, etc. which they don't presently have. What this means is that the Post Office might have to become self supporting leading to higher postal rates but hopefully no more strikes.

1973GP Fall 1907 - SMALL SKIRMISHES WON BY BOTH SIDES BUT NEITHER SIDE IS ABLE TO BREAK DEADLOCK!

Austria (Richard Kukan) a tyl-pie, a ven s tyl-pie, a boh-mun, a vie-tyl, f tri h, f apu s russian f ion h, a nap s rom, a rom s nap
England (Laurence Gillespie) f iri-mid, f mid-wme, f bot-liv, a stp s bot-liv, f nwy s stp, f bal s French f ber h, a den watches blue movies..
France (Brian Clogg) a gas-spa, a bel-hol, a bur s mun, a ruh s mun, a pie-ver, /d/ r-Mar, otb, a mun h, a tun-naf, f ber h, f lyo s tyr-tus, f tyr-tus, f wme-tun

Italy (Ron Kelly) f adr s french f tyr-ion (nso)
 Russia (Larry Doble) a sil-ber, a pru s sil-ber, f ion h, a liv h, a war s
 liv, a mos s liv, a gal-sil
Supply Centres
 A: 9 Centres - Vie, bud, tri, rom, nap, ven, ser, gre smy; Build 1
 E: 7 Centres - edi, lvp, lon, nwy, den, swe, stp; Even
 F: 11 Centres - bre, par, mar, por, spa, tun, bel, hol, mun, kie, ber; Even
 I: 0 Centres - ~~rom~~; Remove 1, Out
 R: 7 Centres - war, mos, sev, rum, bul, don, ank; Even
 Thanks go to Ron for playing out the position..
 Press - Russian troops have settled into their Bunkers to wait for the Eng-
 lish to realize their attack is hopeless in the east. Meanwhile, French
 coastal authorities report unauthorized english fleet movement.

1974HF Spring 1902 - TURKEY STABS RUSSIA, WHO STABS GERMANY AND AUSTRIA,
 GERMANY STABS ITALY WHO ATTACKS FRANCE WHO...
 Austria(Ron Ford) a ser-bul, f gre s ser-bul, a bud-ser, f tri-alb, a gal
s Russian f rum h
 England (David Truman) f nth s russian f swe-den, a nwy-swe, f lon-eng,
 f wal-iri
 France (Jim Lawson) f bre-s-eng, f eng engages in cleaning up oil spills (h)
 a par-bur, a spa-mar
 Germany (Laurence Gillespie) f kie-hel, f hol s kie-hel, f ber-kie, a den
s Russian f swe h, (nso) /a/, a mun-tyl, a bel h
 Italy (Sharon Currie) a pie-mar, a tus-pie, f rom-tyr, f tun-wme
 Russia (Jelle Terpstra) a mos-stp, f swe h, a war-gal, a ukr-rum, f sev s
 ukr-rum, f rum-bla
 Turkey (Larry Doble) a bul h, a con s bul, f bla s bul, f smy-aeg
 This game is unimpressed at present. Zaabar tells me that he says "HMMM..."
 about this game and I would certainly tend to agree.

Due to the postal situation I am going to make the deadline four weeks.
 Therefore, I am asking for Winter/Spring in GP and Fall in HF by March 18,
 1975.

Your sub ends after issue _____! Resub or Madame Terri
 will come and work you over!

Doug, Thanks a million - L.L., Doug Beyerlein
 Take care,

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